



Southeastern Idaho Public Health

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
April 27 , 2020

Contact: Tracy McCulloch
(208)239-5250

Safe Grocery Shopping to Reduce Your Risk of COVID-19

As grocery shopping remains a necessity during this pandemic, many people have questions about how to shop safely.

Stores are taking special safety precautions in light of COVID-19, such as limiting the number of people allowed in the store at one time, disinfecting carts and frequently touched surfaces, and placing tape or markings on the floor to help with social distancing.

But there are still steps customers can take to reduce the spread of coronavirus and reduce their risk of catching COVID-19.

Before you go to the store:

- Consider whether you really need to go shopping. Stay home as much as possible.
- Consider curb side pick-up or delivery this helps reduce the number of people going into stores and touching things, and helps people follow social distancing rules.
- Try shopping at off-peak hours and buying as many items as you can from one store rather than visiting multiple stores.
- Don't bring the whole family: It's best to shop alone. This reduces the number of people going to stores.
- Don't go if you have symptoms: It's very important not to go shopping if you are showing symptoms of COVID-19 (such as fever, cough or shortness of breath), or if you think you have been exposed to the virus.

At the store:

- Sanitize your hands often: Use hand sanitizer before entering the store and after leaving.
- If your store doesn't provide disinfecting wipes, bring your own wipes to use on carts, basket handles and card readers.
- Wear a mask: This recommendation is intended to prevent the spread of COVID-19 from people who are infected but aren't showing symptoms.

- Practice social distancing: As with any public setting, you should maintain a distance of at least 6 feet from others.
- Touch only what you buy: Try not to touch things unnecessarily.
- Don't touch your face: Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth with unwashed hands.

When you get home:

- Wash your hands: You should wash your hands when you get home and again after you finish unloading your groceries.
- Don't leave your food outside: Although some people have suggested leaving your groceries in your garage for three days to kill the virus, this is bad advice. Not only is it not scientifically proven, it's also a food safety issue. Leaving food outside, in your garage or car, may mean that the food is not stored at the proper temperature to prevent bacterial growth.
- Rinse your produce: it's always a good idea — even when there's no pandemic — to rinse fresh fruit and vegetables with water to remove dirt, debris and pesticides, and reduce levels of foodborne germs.
- Don't use soap: There's no need to use soap or chemical disinfectants on your produce. Dish soap is not approved for use on foods, and consuming it could lead to nausea and upset stomach.
- Wash reusable bags: If you use reusable grocery bags you should wash them after a trip to the store.

For more information, visit siphidaho.org, call out hotline at 208.234.5875 or watch us live on Facebook Monday-Friday at 11 a.m.